

April 2, 1984

LB 880A

the state employee would have been reduced under the family plan by \$4 a month for intermediate option. For the high option it would have been reduced \$9 a month. You would have been able, not only to save \$800,000 in state taxes, you would have been able to reduce the premiums paid by state employees for their health insurance. You would have also set up a policy that would have encouraged health care cost containment and instead that was thrown out the window and we are back to the same old plan and the same old ways. We are going to have to change someday. The change when it comes is going to be hard, it is going to be tough. This Legislature is going to have to be tough to make that change. If you don't want to do it, I understand, but surely at some point we have to see the light and make the adjustments that have to be made or continue down the road that we can no longer afford the health care cost increases that we are now suffering under. It is very unfortunate that you voted to override.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Marsh.

SENATOR MARSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members of the Legislature. Perhaps the out of state or out of Lincoln Senators were not inundated with telephone calls this weekend as I was, but a number of state employees called and said I would rather have the override on the insurance than a salary increase. My family income is so low that I cannot afford even with the reduction this would make to be responsible. We are expecting a baby the first of October. The employees know it is coming next year. They can do their planning. It is a little late when the baby is on the way to do the planning for this year. I feel that it is terribly important. We have overridden 880. The second half of that is to override 880A. It is not lightly cast the vote I will make. I did call and talk with the head of the Department of Personnel and explained why I feel this is important to do this year. The state employees need this year to be ready for next year. Senator Wesely is partly right. It will come. It will come and they will have had a whole year of time to be ready for it but three months is not sufficient time. April has started. July 1st will be here quicker than you think. We need to override on 880A.